



DECEMBER 2001

GRAY DAVIS, GOVERNOR
 MARIA CONTRERAS-SWEET, SECRETARY OF BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY
 JEFF MORALES, DIRECTOR
 ROBERT W. SASSAMAN, DISTRICT 7 DIRECTOR



Inside Seven - a District 7 Edition of the CT News

A Special Holiday Message

This year – unlike any other – has been filled with tremendous highs for us as a District, but great sadness for our Country.

We do not close this year with great joy despite having achieved many of our goals for the Department. America is at war. Some of you may have family members far from home who will miss traditional gatherings during this special season due to military duty.

At Caltrans, our work unites us. This has led to special friendships, respect for one another, and an appreciation of our diverse cultures which have so richly served to enhance who we are as employees and as people. In a real sense, this has made us a family; a team.

The projects we produce for our customers are first-rate. This is due to your individual dedication and firm commitment and pledge to deliver only high quality transportation, the life and future of our state. As a result, each Division's performance honorably stands as a tribute to the Department's living achievement to provide efficient mobility in the Southland and across California for residents, the movement of goods and services and tourists alike.

As some of you travel over these holidays, there may be an opportunity to point out to your passengers that it is Caltrans' good work that is responsible for mobility improvements which have made it possible for California families to be together at important times like this, and whenever they choose.

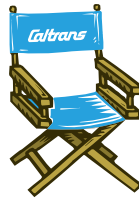
Most of you work behind the scenes, but your accomplishments are noted along every freeway mile driven. From project concepts, design, planning, environmental, constructing, operating and managing, maintenance and upgrades to that of administering – it is your combined efforts that continue to bring praise and recognition to the Department.

Now – as each of you prepare for the holidays in your own way, the Executive staff sends its warmest greetings to all of our District 7 employees, the entire California Department of Transportation, as well as to our valued partners in other agencies and cities throughout Los Angeles and Ventura Counties.

May these holidays touch each of us with peace and may the New Year of 2002 be one that spreads peace and joy for all of the world. •



Robert W. Sassaman *B. F. F.* *Robert W. Sassaman*
Robert Davis *Greg A. Caring* *Bill Reag*
Jeff Morales *PA* *Michael M.*
Ron Kinski *John* *Thomas F. Gandy*



THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

This past year has really flown by and here we are ready to start the holidays again. It hardly seems possible that twelve months have passed so quickly. In fact, we recently held our second Director's meeting here at District 7, which is a once-a-year event. Last year it was in October and this year we held it in November when we were pleased to host a tour of the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach for Caltrans Director Jeff Morales, his staff and all of our Caltrans District Directors throughout the state.

Representatives from the Port of Long Beach initially took us on a land tour where we were able to witness, first-hand, the importance and vastness of the port operations. At the conclusion of that portion of the tour, representatives from the City of Los Angeles guided us on a boat tour of their port area by sea where we viewed the huge ships coming into the harbor and loading and unloading their immense cargo. Just the presence and size of the ships loading and unloading their enormous containers was awesome to see from our smaller craft. We followed these tours with a workshop that included a presentation by representatives from the goods movement industry where we were all able to dialogue with them. The panel was organized by Rose Casey, Deputy District Director for Planning, with assistance from Joan Sollenberger from Headquarters Planning. Panel participants included: Mark Pisano, Executive Director, Southern California Association of Governments; Jim Ritchie, Deputy Executive Director, Los Angeles World Airports; Richard Hollingsworth, President/Chief Executive Officer, Gateway Cities Partnership, Inc.; Patty Senecal, Vice President, Transport Express representing the California Trucking Association; LaDonna DiCamillo, Director, Governmental Affairs, The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company; Geraldine Katz, Managing Director, Port of Long Beach; and moderator Marianne Venieris, Executive Director, Center for International Trade and Transportation (CITT), California State University at Long Beach, University

College and Extension Services.

The presentations were extremely well done and helped perk the interest statewide on the issues associated with goods movement and the stronger role Caltrans needs to play now and in the future. Many thanks to all panel members for their expertise and participation; and to Rose and Joan for their efforts in making this a most interesting and enlightening tour for everyone involved. It is through these partnerships where we learn how Caltrans can assist in making the operation of the ports more efficient. It is always a pleasure to have Director Morales and the entire statewide staff at District 7 to see the many projects, people and accomplishments in Los Angeles and Ventura counties. I am looking forward to when we will host these meetings in our brand new building, which is getting closer and closer as each day goes by. Be ready to watch for construction to start next spring!

As a team, District 7 did an outstanding job this past year. There is a lot of pride in this District and I know that all of you want to continue with the many goals in project delivery that you set this past year. Even though we are temporarily located in four buildings as we await our new facility, I can see that communications are still excellent and we will continue to move ahead to meet and exceed those goals.

My sincere thanks to each and every one of you for a great year. And the very best to you during the upcoming holidays and in the year ahead. •

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. W. Sassaman".

ROBERT W. SASSAMAN
District Director

MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT TRAINING CENTER CELEBRATES GRAND OPENING

By Jeanne Bonfilio

A brand new Maintenance Equipment Training Center (METC) opened recently amid a fanfare of enthusiasm. Michael Miles, Deputy District Director for Maintenance, was on hand to help officially open the Center, along with a host of personnel who were instrumental in the endeavor. "The METC combines the latest in Caltrans Maintenance training equipment with an emphasis on safety," said Miles. "This new Center will train our employees to be more efficient, more proficient and the safest workers possible."

Miles was joined by dozens of colleagues to celebrate the Center's eagerly anticipated grand opening, which had been a vision of the Maintenance Division. From their existing budget, Maintenance management and personnel combined resources on hand and "people power" to make their vision a reality. Some employees even donated their own time and expertise to see the project to completion. "Everyone at



Maintenance management welcomes guests to the METC grand opening ceremony. Left to right: Tom Almany, Bruce Flaws, Larry Orcutt and Michael Miles.

District 7 involved in this important METC grand opening pulled together as a team with the strong support of the Maintenance Region Managers,"

said Tom Almany, Office Chief, Maintenance.

Every Maintenance employee is required to qualify on a myriad of heavy equipment. The METC will assist each of the Maintenance regions in complying with the equipment qualification program as mandated by Headquarters. The Center will offer Maintenance Workers such training as: commercial license upgrades; equipment qualification on trucks, trailers, loaders and other heavy equipment; vehicle simulators which simulate rain, snow, sleet and adverse working and weather conditions; two-way radio; Chapter 8 (protection of workers); landscape and highway maintenance courses; writing and math skills; and many other courses to assist employees with proficiency, efficiency, safety and upward mobility in the Department. It is anticipated that some 400



Members of the METC team receive special Superior Accomplishment Awards. Left to right: Michael Miles, Tony Garcia, Marvin Pruitt, Manuel Costello, Shawn Silva, Darla Duncan, Steve Wagner and Headquarters Maintenance Program Manager, Larry Orcutt.

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The Freeway Service Patrol celebrates 10 years of public service to freeway commuters with a special cake-cutting ceremony. Left to right, first row kneeling: FSP Tow Operators Felix Gonzalez, Eleazar Chaparro, Gustavo De Leon; Alfredo Andrade, Eric Nakao and James Davidson. Second row standing: FSP Tow Operators Enoch Alexander, Carlos Menendez and Sergio Lopez; CHP Lieutenant Joe Vizcarra; John Fasana, MTA Board Chairman; Robert W. Sassaman, Caltrans District 7 Director; FSP Tow Operators Edward Gonzalez, Juan Carlos Enciso, Dean Pierce, Aliseo Juarez, Gary Williams, Brian Flynn and Victor Terol. Third row, right rear: CHP Sergeant Vince Lee.

Freeway Service Patrol 10th Anniversary

By Ivy Estrada

On Friday, August 31 at the Dodger Stadium parking lot overlooking busy freeways, tow truck drivers joined the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), the California Highway Patrol (CHP), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and invited guests to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Metropolitan Freeway Service Patrol (MFSP), the highly successful free towing service available to freeway commuters.

As a result of MFSP's success in the Los Angeles area and legislation authored by State Senator Betty

Karnette, the program was expanded statewide. The FSP (the statewide name) operates in nine areas throughout California in addition to the Los Angeles area. Former Assemblyman Richard Katz was instrumental in getting MFSP started in Los Angeles.

MFSP is a joint program of Caltrans, the MTA and the CHP. MFSP tow trucks patrol busy freeways during rush hours, looking for disabled vehicles and vehicles that have been involved in minor traffic accidents. If the tow truck operator is not able to get a vehicle moving again with minor measures such as changing a flat tire or providing a gallon of gasoline, the operator will tow the car to a safe location off the freeway. Typically, MFSP is able to remove

an inoperative vehicle from the freeway within only five minutes.

Attendees at the ceremony included: Michael Levine, representing Governor Gray Davis; Ted Mulhauser, representing Senator Betty Karnette; Roland Arango, representing Assemblymember Judy Chu; Peter Nam, representing Assemblymember Jerome Horton; Veronica Zendejas, representing Assemblymember Jenny Oropeza; Chief Skip Carter, Lieutenant Joe Vizcarra and Sergeant Vince Lee, CHP; Byron Lee, Director, Congestion Relief Operations, MTA; John Fasana, Board Chairman, MTA; Robert W. Sassaman, Caltrans District Director; Frank Quon, Caltrans Deputy District Director of Operations; Tom Choe, Caltrans

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Equal Opportunity Corner

By James Crouse, Equal Opportunity Officer

Caltrans Director Jeff Morales has made his commitment to diversity at Caltrans an important priority. In District 7, we share this commitment, not only because we recognize it as an important civil rights issue, but as a prudent business strategy. We know that diversity contributes to our body of ideas and helps us be more responsive to the needs of the people we serve.

We also know that diversity brings its own special challenges. To assist us in meeting these challenges, the Equal

Employment Opportunity Office has been offering a training course entitled "Diversity in the Workplace." The class is open to all District 7 employees and, to date, approximately 900 employees within the District have completed the training. The classes will continue to be offered until all District 7 employees have been trained.

The District has been extremely fortunate to have Bob Gallegos, an Industrial Psychologist and partner of

Gallegos, Brown, Silvey and Associates, to present the course. Bob challenges us to think about the ways we interact with each other and has helped us to understand how diversity contributes to the richness of the ideas we bring to the workplace. Ask anyone who's been through the two-day course and they will tell you what an incredible experience it has been.

There are still openings in classes scheduled from March through June, 2002. Call Carmen Roberts at (213) 897-8244 or James Crouse at (213) 897-3865 to get on board! •



Office of Traffic Investigations relocates to 1000 Wilshire Boulevard. Doug Failing, Chief Deputy Director, cuts the official ribbon celebrating the new temporary relocation of the Office of Traffic Investigations. Joining him were, near left-hand side of ribbon: Frank Quon, Deputy District Director, Operations; to his left Steve Leung, Office Chief, Traffic Investigations; to his left Dawn Helou, Senior Transportation Engineer, Operations; and many delighted staff members.

METC

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employees will be trained annually.

"Our purpose is to give employees an opportunity to operate equipment in an environment that is safe for them and the traveling public," noted Marvin Pruitt, Maintenance Area Superintendent for METC. And according to Maintenance Training Supervisor Shawn Silva, nothing is more important at work than safety. He said, "No job is so important that safety is not number one." Pruitt also added that the workers are trained at the facility in a controlled environment without interrupting the day-to-day Caltrans Maintenance operations.

Silva also wished to thank Steve Wagner, North Region Maintenance Area Superintendent, for his efforts during the early stages. "Steve was instrumental in helping to get the project off the ground by providing materials and funding," said Silva. And Wagner responded, "I was happy to be of service with this exciting and important project."

Tony Garcia, Equipment Operator and METC Trainer, said he is very proud to be able to assist in training employees and to help his co-workers become more proficient in their daily work activities. Echoing his sentiments was Manuel Costello, also an Equipment Operator and Trainer, who added, "I am happy to be able to share my many years of Caltrans Maintenance experience and knowledge with fellow employees."

Bruce Flaws, Superintendent, Headquarters Maintenance Equipment Training Academy (META), traveled from Sacramento to make a special presentation of the META Charter and to congratulate all involved in a job well done. Also included in the day's celebration were a tour of the new facility, a ride-along demonstration, a luncheon and spe-

cial celebration cake.

Darla Duncan, Maintenance Training Supervisor, concluded by saying that the new Center went from an empty lot and a vision — to a state-of-the-art Caltrans training facility. "We are here to help our workers do their jobs better and safer and help staff to promote," she said. "We are all very excited to be able to assist the Maintenance regions and our employees in having the most efficient, effective and safe Caltrans workforce!" •

FSP

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Office Chief of Operations; Hassan Safari, Caltrans FSP Manager; and MFSP officers and dispatchers.

Honorees at the event included eighteen tow truck contractors who provide 145 trucks to patrol 422 miles of Los Angeles area freeways. In addition to celebrating 10 years of service, the event's purpose was to bring more attention to the services MFSP provides. "Some motorists are

wary of getting unsolicited assistance, especially if it is free," said Fasana, who urged the public to remember the FSP is there to help. "Just look for the FSP and METRO "M" logos on the tow trucks and on drivers' uniforms," Fasana said.

In the past decade, FSP drivers have assisted nearly three million stranded motorists. This has prevented an estimated 22 million vehicle hours of traffic delays and more than 3,000 tons of air pollutants from entering the atmosphere from emissions caused by idling vehicles. FSP also saved nine million gallons of fuel from being wasted by vehicles stuck in congested traffic.

Sassaman applauded the successful results the FSP partnership has created. "It proves what can be accomplished with cooperation among agencies and the private sector. The FSP's accomplishments augment the Transportation Congestion Relief Program that Governor Gray Davis authorized in April of 2000," Sassaman said.

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California Highway Patrol Freeway Service Patrol Officers. Left to right: Sergeant Vince Lee, Officer Bill Glass, Officer Mike Miscione, Officer Bob Smart, Officer Rod Carter, Officer Eric Weinmann, Officer Charlie Blair, Officer Bob Granieri, Officer Bill McKenna and Officer Bob Headden.

Ms. Deborah Robertson,
Deputy District Director,
External Affairs



Dear Ms. Robertson:

Thank you very much for your help with the mural project sponsored by Catalyst for Care, a project of Community Partners. Several local children and their families, USC occupational therapy and graduate leadership program students and local artists engaged in this community beautification project at Jefferson Boulevard and the Pasadena (110) Freeway in University Park. This was a fun event for the painters and the mural will brighten thousands of commuters' and pedestrians' travels as they make their way through the underpass every day. We really appreciate your commitment to assist community-based projects like our mural. Thanks for helping to make a difference in many people's lives.

Best Regards,
Chris Kahle, President and Ibbey
Roberts, Treasurer, Catalyst for Care

Dear Caltrans:

I just wanted to send a big "thanks and a great job" to Enoch Alvarado and his team who came out and cleared all the brush and trash that we reported. Also, there are Caltrans workers taking care of the sprinkler system problem and we are so pleased with the response from Caltrans. Your efforts are truly appreciated. Thank you, Mr. Alvarado, and your team, for being such dedicated workers!

Unsigned

Mr. Tom Choe, Office Chief,
Operations

Dear Mr. Choe:

Thank you for your kind note and for your assistance at hosting our Wiley Travel Scholarship winner, Ms. Jennifer Hormel. Based upon what you've described, I am confident that Jennifer's visit was one of the true highlights of her trip... Finally, thank you for your willingness to host future Wiley Scholars at Caltrans. Since the award winner gets to select the region of the United States to visit, an award winner will typically visit the West Coast every two to three years. I would certainly recommend a visit to the Caltrans District 7 office to future Wiley Scholars.

Warm Regards,
William G. Buttlar, P. E., Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Civil
Engineering
University of Illinois at Urbana-
Champaign

Dear Caltrans:

Thank you very much for attending our recent Career Day organized by Rosie Diaz. We are most grateful to Rosie and her brother Ruben for initiating and organizing this day. Your presence truly enriched our students. Among all of you, each student found many new and interesting facets of our world to consider. We know they will remember your words of advice and hopefully will follow them! The whole day had a very diverse flavor – from government to business to law

enforcement to service professions. It is broadening for our students to meet people in so many different careers. Each one of you was an excellent role model and I believe the students were favorably impressed by the respectful manner in which you related to them. Thank you again for taking time from your busy schedule to be with us.

Sincerely in Christ,
Sister Ena Maguire, SJC
Principal, Ss. Peter and Paul School

Dear Caltrans:

I am not reporting a problem; this is just a compliment for you. It is really nice how you have smoothed out the lanes on the northbound Golden State Freeway (I-5) near Roxford in Sylmar with the giant white belt sanders. It makes for a real smooth ride and I really appreciate it. Thanks!

Unsigned

FSP

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With a cake cutting, a convoy of MFSP vehicles and the testimonies of motorists Bob Taylor and Alva Corral who thanked MFSP drivers for assisting each of them when their vehicles stalled on the freeway, it was a festive occasion. Levine presented a letter of commendation from Governor Gray Davis to the FSP "for its outstanding contributions to the public."

Many thanks go out to the Freeway Service Patrol. They are literally "knights in shining armor!"

For more information about MFSP, call the hotline at (213) 922-2957 or log onto the MTA's website at mta.net. •

What's **Cookin' At Caltrans**

HOLIDAY SNOWBALL COOKIES

From *Jeanne Bonfilio, Public Affairs*



- 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup chopped pecans
- 3/4 - 1 cup additional powdered sugar

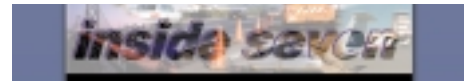
Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Cream butter, sugar and vanilla until fully mixed. Mix flour and salt together and add to creamed mixture; blend well. Add nuts and mix well. Roll into 1-inch balls and bake 8-10 minutes. Do not brown. Roll in powdered sugar straight from oven. Roll again in powdered sugar when cooled.

CARNATION FAMOUS HOLIDAY FUDGE

From *www.nestle.com*

- 1-1/2 cups granulated sugar
- 2/3 cup Nestle Carnation Evaporated Milk
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups miniature marshmallows
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans or walnuts
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1-1/2 cups Nestle Toll House Semi-Sweet Chocolate Morsels

Line 8-inch-square baking pan with foil. Combine sugar, evaporated milk, butter and salt in medium, heavy-duty saucepan. Bring to a full rolling boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Boil, stirring constantly, for 4 to 5 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in marshmallows, morsels, nuts and vanilla extract. Stir vigorously for 1 minute or until marshmallows are melted. Pour into prepared baking pan; refrigerate for 2 hours or until firm. Lift from pan; remove foil. Cut into pieces.



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